

# Survival and Hope *Life After Cancer*



**LAURA YOUNG, 36**  
DIAGNOSIS: STAGE 4 BREAST CANCER

## The Basics:

- **RESIDENCE:** Victorville
- **OCCUPATION:** Volunteer at children's school, Galileo Academy, five days per week
- **FAMILY:** Husband, David Young; sons Jaden, 12; twins Evan and Jacob, 10; Ethan, 8; Jonathan, 5
- **PHILOSOPHY:** Things happen for a reason. The Lord put me on this path, the only way to face it is positivity

By Alberta Hale Crigler

This Saturday, Laura Young will be at a pool tournament in her honor at the Rusty Bull in Apple Valley. She is the first of eight local cancer survivors that will benefit from the High Desert Angels' Cues for a Cure 2018 8-Ball Tournament & Fundraiser Events.

The group is putting on eight qualifiers from Sept. 8 through Oct. 13, and a championship tournament on Oct. 20. At the conclusion of the series, each honoree will receive a portion of the proceeds.

Young was nominated by Tasha Champion, a cancer survivor who works for Young's doctor and is active in cancer support groups and events.

"It is going to be fun," Young said. There will be music, food and karaoke. I am really excited. My day is Sept 8. There will be seven more events for seven other cancer patients. Each person has their own special day to be honored. At the end (of the series), the person who wins the (championship) wins a thousand bucks."

Last year, High Desert Angels raised \$20,000 and gave each honoree \$2,500. This year, the group's goal is to raise \$24,000.

Young's breast cancer journey began in 2016. "I felt a lump in my left breast," she said, "but the results came back normal."

However, early this year, "I lost some weight and noticed something in my right breast," she said. "They did a 3D



mammogram and they told me they didn't need a biopsy (to know) it was cancer.

"My doctor says I probably had cancer for at least four years because of size of tumor. It is in both breasts and in bones, now.

"I think if they had done the 3D mammogram in 2016, we would have found it then. You think you are doing everything right and then it is just one of those things.

"The first thing my husband said was, 'OK, how do we beat this?' He believes I am a very strong person, so he has never once thought I couldn't beat it.

"My oldest son, the first thing out of his mouth, was 'not everybody dies of cancer.'

"(Our five children) live their lives as normally as possible, but sometimes mommy is a little tired. Or they get extra play dates or time with their friends because mommy is at the hospital. They are very, very positive."

Still, Young has grappled with thoughts she has in common with other cancer survivors.

"Getting out of your own head is the biggest obstacle," she said. "Everyone has the moment where you are: OK, why? You wonder if you will see your kids graduate, get married, your grandchildren.

Still, Young says anyone fighting cancer should "stay



*"You wonder if you will see your kids graduate, get married, your grandchildren."*

strong and stay positive. There are so many options out there, there is never a reason to give up.

"Even my diagnosis, Stage 4, I don't think its going to be the end. I think I will see my kids get married and have children."

Young wants to spread a message about the importance of getting a definitive diagnosis.

"If you don't know what it is, you need to be your own advocate. Get all the tests run until you know what it is.

Now Young is participating in a clinical trial.

"When my doctor first told me chemo wasn't working the way it was supposed to, because I am Stage 4, she said 'clinical trials'," Young Said.

"As soon as you hear clinical trial, you think last resort. But there is a never-ending array of possibilities. It is almost impossible not to be hopeful."

## Caregiver Perspective



David Young was "shocked and very sad" when he heard his wife's cancer diagnosis.

"When you get news like that, regardless, you are going to be positive. She wants to be the best mom and wife. You realize how valuable her life is and what she wants out of life.

"I appreciated her before, but now even more. You still try to be the best you can in the relationship. I feel like it makes the relationship stronger."

David says a clinical trial can benefit Laura and others in the future. "At the end of day, they are studying you," he said.

"They told Laura, 'We have this, we are going to go with the plan, but you are a practice for people in the future.'"

"That is always a good thing. They are trying to help you and people in the future if they get a similar cancer."

For more information about the Cues for a Cure events, call Angie Miller at 760-987-1674 or see <http://highdesertangels.org/Cues-for-a-Cure-Info.php>



The American Cancer Society provides a 24 hour service to answer questions about diagnosis, insurance, local support and resources

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